



CONGRESSMAN CURT WELDON

*7th District Pennsylvania*



February 28, 1997

**STATEMENT OF HONORABLE CURT WELDON  
CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
FEDERAL RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC TERRORISM INVOLVING WEAPONS OF  
MASS DESTRUCTION  
COUNTER-TERRORISM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

*FEBRUARY 28, 1997*

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Today, the Research and Development Subcommittee meets to receive testimony from the Department of Defense and the Department of State on the federal government's response to the threat of domestic terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction and the counter-terrorism research and development program. This hearing is a follow-on to the subcommittee's March 12, 1996 hearing "Chemical - Biological Defense and Response to Urban Terrorism." At that hearing we heard that plans and preparations are being made in the federal government at the interagency level and in coordination with local emergency management and response agencies to respond to such a terrorist incident, or to a natural disaster involving chemical, biological, or radiological materials. It was clear from the testimony that progress is being made, but that additional progress is required. Today the subcommittee will get an indication of the progress that is being made in defense and interagency research and development to meet this threat and actions that may be required in the future.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 required the President to provide an assessment of the Federal government's capabilities for response to the potential threat of terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction and measures that should be taken to improve those capabilities. I understand that that report to the Congress is on the President's desk for approval and hope that our witnesses may give us a general indication of the content of that report during their testimony and in the question period that will follow.

We are pleased to have as our witnesses:

The Honorable H. Allen Holmes  
Assistant Secretary of Defense  
(Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict)

and

Ambassador Phillip C. Wilcox, Jr.  
Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism  
Department of State.

Gentlemen, welcome. We look forward to your testimony today.

To speak to the problem from the viewpoint of the local response agencies, I have also invited the Fire Chief who responded to the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Chief Gary Marrs of the Oklahoma City Fire Department, and ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to make a few remarks during the course of the hearing.

Chief Marrs, we look forward to any comments you might wish to make.